

Ontario Regional Office  
RR #2, Godfrey,  
Ontario K0H 1T0  
Tel (613) 273-5545  
Fax (613) 273-6290  
[nfuo@rideaul.net](mailto:nfuo@rideaul.net)  
[www.nfu.ca](http://www.nfu.ca)



**national farmers union**  
*In Union Is Strength*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**MARCH 26, 2008**

## **ONTARIO OPTS FOR A “STAND-PAT” BUDGET, SAYS NFU**

The Ontario government has taken positive steps in the last few months to assist the province’s farm families, but the “stand-pat” budget released March 25 by Ontario Finance Minister Dwight Duncan represents a missed opportunity,” says Grant Robertson, National Farmers Union (NFU) Ontario Coordinator.

Robertson said Ontario’s farm community is in tremendous turmoil at this time, primarily because of record low livestock prices. While Agriculture Minister Leona Dombrowsky’s programs are appreciated, there is still a huge gap between what exists and what is needed, he said.

“It’s not as if there is anything terribly wrong with this budget,” said Robertson. “But there’s nothing terribly right about it either.” References to the “Buy Ontario Freshness” marketing slogan are fine, but more substantial efforts are required to fix the flaws in the marketing system for food so that family farmers are able to recapture a bigger share of the food dollar.

“Farmers who want to sell their meat directly have a hard time getting processing spots,” he stated. “Concrete financial support to Ontario’s small-town abattoirs and meat processors would have been a good place to invest for farmers and would have created good jobs at the same time. It is a missed opportunity.”

Robertson said job creation in rural Ontario will happen if farmers are able to make a living from farming. “It’s a well-known fact that the money farmers make is spent in rural communities,” he said. “The NFU supports the movement for more locally-sourced food. It is good to see the provincial government moving in this direction. There are opportunities for farmers if we reorient our food system to recapture our own markets. This would create jobs for Ontarians and stabilize farmers’ incomes at the same time. In this regard the budget is a missed opportunity.”

- 30 -

Contact:

Grant Robertson, NFU Ontario Coordinator (519) 353-4033 or (519) 386-1904